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'His picture says everything'

- Gabriel Josh-Cazir Pierre 'was a very happy child'
- Advocates say tragic deaths like his are preventable {page 02}

News

Learn from Stephen Colbert

- BU writing class revolves around satirical 'Colbert Report'
- Rhetoric study seminar fills up 'instantly' {page 06}

Megan Fox says she was too slim

The actress on her vegan diet and what she plans to do to get her curves back {page 10}

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No charges yet in child's death

Incidents such as the one that killed 17-month-old Gabriel Josh-Cazir Pierre are 'preventable,' advocacy group says ◗ Charges unlikely in his death until after an autopsy ◗ That could take weeks, DA's office says

NICOLAUS CZARNECKI/METRO

▶ A makeshift memorial sits outside Gloria Luna's Family Day Care in Dorchester.

As authorities yesterday continued to investigate the death of a toddler found in a school van, child advocates said those kinds of incidents are preventable.

Charges had yet to be filed in the death of 17-month-old Gabriel Josh-Cazir Pierre and they likely will not be until after an autopsy is complete, a spokesman for the Suffolk district attorney's office said. Complete autopsy results could take weeks.

Pierre was found dead inside a school van in front of a Dorchester day care Monday afternoon. Police believe the boy was left there for hours.

Police said the driver of the van, who was hospitalized after discovering the boy, was likely inside the home housing the day care.

The facility, Gloria Luna's Family Day Care, was shut down after the incident when city officials found it had no certificates to operate, as well as multiple violations.

Monday's incident in which Pierre was found dead was just one of three recent incidents of children left in cars and buses in the Greater Boston area.

Boston police officers on foot patrol yesterday were notified of an 8-month-old left unattended in a car in Roxbury. They were able to free the child, who was "sweating heavily."

When the mother, Idalia Grant, 27, of Boston, showed up, she began crying and said she forgot the child in the car and was gone for up to 30 minutes, police said.

The child was expected to be OK, and Grant was charged with neglect of a child.

Sue Auriemma, a member of the child advocacy group KidsAndCars.org, said such incidents are common and preventable.

"Many school systems now require drivers to check the buses or vans," she said. "It's becoming a more common policy."

MICHAEL NAUGHTON
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'Common tragedy'

KidsAndCars.org compiles reports of children left in cars from across the U.S.

So far this year, according to the organization, 27 children have died from being trapped inside a vehicle. Four other, similar incidents are pending autopsy results.

Virginia Cazir's words

"Our family is heartbroken over the loss of our beautiful son, Gabriel. Gabriel was a very happy child and his picture says everything. We are asking everyone to please be respectful of our privacy as we try to grieve and cope with our unimaginable circumstance."

Such a thing as a free lunch

Skip that fancy lunch and get over to City Hall for a free Wendy's cheeseburger and Frosty today.

The "Hot 'n Juicy Tour of America," courtesy of Wendy's, will stop at City Hall plaza from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and hand out 1,500 free cheeseburgers and frozen Frosty treats.

The event launches the fast food chain's new burger.

While you're there, you can try to win contest prizes, catch some live performances and get in on photo opportunities. METRO

Roxbury man pleads in murder

A Roxbury man pleaded guilty yesterday to charges stemming from the murder of a 13-year-old boy in 2007.

According to the Suffolk County district attorney, Nurudeen Alabi, 22, pleaded guilty to the crime of manslaughter, accepting a prison term of 17 years rather than face trial on the murder charge.

According to reports, in 2007, Alabi allegedly shot the boy at the Jackson Square T station. METRO

UMass: Gamers are smarter

According to a recent study conducted by a UMass Amherst researcher, playing Bejeweled Blitz makes people smarter.

Susan K. Whitbourne, Ph.D., revealed the results of a study that surveyed 10,000 U.S. adults after playing the puzzle game.

According to Whitbourne, 47 percent of adults over 50 who played Bejeweled Blitz regularly said they felt "sharper" when performing other tasks.

Similarly, 23.9 percent of adults over 65 felt their ability to see patterns improved. METRO

In the news

Bringing in outside dollars

Redevelopment Authority Director Peter Meade said the city is on the radar for investors looking to bring business to Boston. Meade told attendees at a Chamber of Commerce breakfast the Hub is one of five "hot U.S. cities right now."

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NICOLAUS CZARNECKI/METRO

▶ Mayor Thomas Menino says he wants to keep guns off the streets.

Mayor's firearms control campaign locked and loaded

A band of mayors and law enforcement officials from across the country this week kicked off a campaign against federal legislation that would keep states from setting their own gun control standards for concealed weapons.

Mayor Thomas Menino, whose Mayors Against Illegal Guns group launched the campaign "Our Lives, Our Laws," said Washington gun lobbyists and their allies in Congress shouldn't be setting standards for each state.

"State and local officials, and police who fight crime on the front lines, should be deciding how to best protect our communities," he said.

Guns nationwide

- **38 states** do not issue permits to people who have been convicted of certain violent crimes
- **36 states** do not issue permits to people under the age of 21
- **35 states** require gun safety training before permitting

"Forcing states to accept a new federal mandate ... for who can carry concealed, loaded guns would be irresponsible, shortsighted and dangerous."

Menino co-chairs the mayor's group with New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

The proposed legislation, the National Right-to-Carry Reciprocity Act of 2011, was scheduled for discussion during a hearing of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security yesterday.

If passed, states would have to honor every other state's permit to carry a concealed gun.

Individuals could carry weapons in public places from state to state, even if they do not meet minimum public safety standards set by a certain state.

A similar measure was defeated in the Senate last year.

STEVE ANNEAR
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Gambling opponents on offense

BOSTON. Opponents rallying against an expanded gambling bill in the Bay State warned lawmakers yesterday, saying their fight against casinos in Massachusetts would continue at the local level — and possibly in court.

Those against the proposed bill claim it will create more alcoholism, suicide and criminal behavior in Massachusetts, according to the State House News Service.

House members have scheduled sessions on the legislation for today and possibly tomorrow.

METRO

Warren will run for Senate

BOSTON. Harvard law professor Elizabeth Warren will run for U.S. Senate in the 2012 election to obtain the seat currently held by Sen. Scott Brown, according to the State House News Service.

Warren is slated to formally announce her candidacy today in Boston.

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'The Colbert Report' in a class of its own

- BU professor uses show to teach 'Socratic method'
- Students examine rhetoric and apply it to writing

In Michael Rodriguez's writing class at Boston University, students can expect to learn about satire in literature, how to critique social injustices and how to construct argumentative essays — all through watching "The Colbert Report."

"It allows students to excavate the more subtle elements of [Stephen Colbert's] art," said Rodriguez.

The BU class dissects and discusses Colbert's monologues and news deliveries, and uses them to create and examine rhetoric.

It is the second time the class is being taught as part of the university's CAS Writing Program, and it filled up "instantly," Rodriguez said.

"We debate in class all the time about topics that are socially relevant."
RODRIGUEZ

Capped at 18 students, the semester-long seminar revolves around watching episodes of "The Colbert Report" both in and out of class, and looking at Colbert's "Socratic method of dialogue."

"I think that it's a good vehicle for students to learn how to write reasoned, well-developed essays that represent thesis statements," said Rodriguez. "Colbert is able to create an argument often improvisationally and cohesively line up that argument, in terms of its overall development. And he does that better than anyone else nowadays."

Classic studies don't go to waste. Rodriguez aligns the curriculum with academic and research writing and has students read works like "A Modest Proposal."

"We debate in class all the time about topics that are socially relevant," he said. "We pick out elements of the essay, and apply it to the show."

STEVE ANNEAR
steve.annear@metro.us

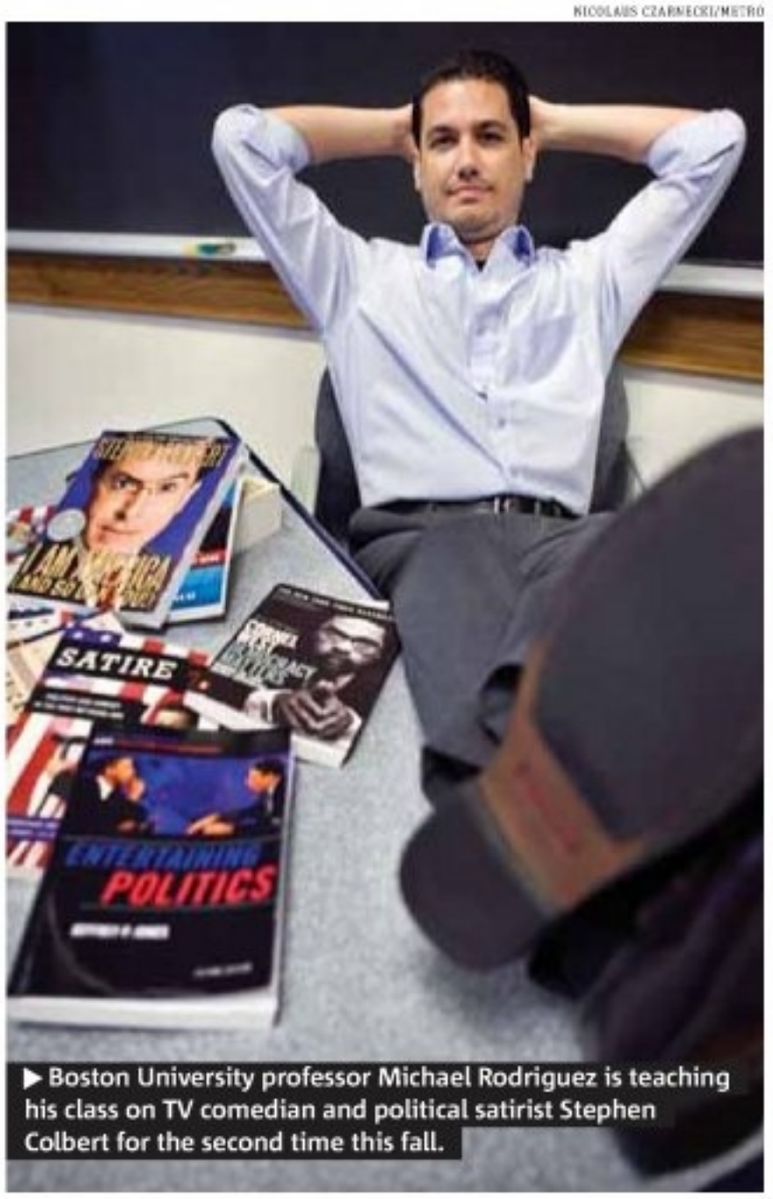
Class act

Schools across town offer classes centered around pop culture phenomena.

Harvard: A writing course explores the challenges and contradictions of urban life and investigates relationships between class, race, violence and politics by watching "The Wire."

BU: A second course offered at BU examines Bob Dylan's lyrics in light of his artistic influences, life and milieu, and the relationship between song lyrics and poetry.

NICOLAUS CZARNECKI/METRO



▶ Boston University professor Michael Rodriguez is teaching his class on TV comedian and political satirist Stephen Colbert for the second time this fall.

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▶ Washington politicians negotiate how to tweak retirement to make 401(k) plans more efficient, keep Social Security afloat and save some money for the federal treasury.

Hoping to retire? Politicians at work debating fine print

U.S. retirement programs could look different if a grand deficit-cutting bargain is struck in upcoming negotiations.

Tomorrow, the powerful Senate Finance Committee will explore "Tax Reform Options: Promoting Retirement Security." Among the ideas being floated are a replacement of the 401(k) deduction, changes in the withdrawal choices that workers face when they retire and a shift in the way Social Security benefits are calculated. That is on top of the increase in the retirement age that has been mentioned several times in recent months.

A variety of pressures and trends have come together to put these new ideas on the table. Prominent members of both political parties have talked up the idea of loophole-closing, rate-lowering tax reform.

Put all of it together, and it points to changes in the sprawling retirement system. "The kinds of points at which you can get fundamental changes adopted is in the midst of a big deal," says Dallas Salisbury, who has been watching retirement policy closely as head of the Employee Benefit Research Institute. "And President Obama wants a grand bargain." REUTERS

$6.6T

The so-called "retirement deficit" — the difference between what Americans have saved for retirement and what they should have saved — has been put at $6.6 trillion by Boston College's Center for Retirement Research.

Debt crisis roils Europe

BERLIN. International alarm over Europe's debt crisis reached new heights yesterday, with President Obama pressing the bloc's big countries to show leadership as talk of a Greek default escalated and markets heaped pressure on Italy. German Chancellor Angela Merkel sought to quash talk of an imminent Greek default or exit from the euro zone, but confusion sent markets gyrating. REUTERS

46M

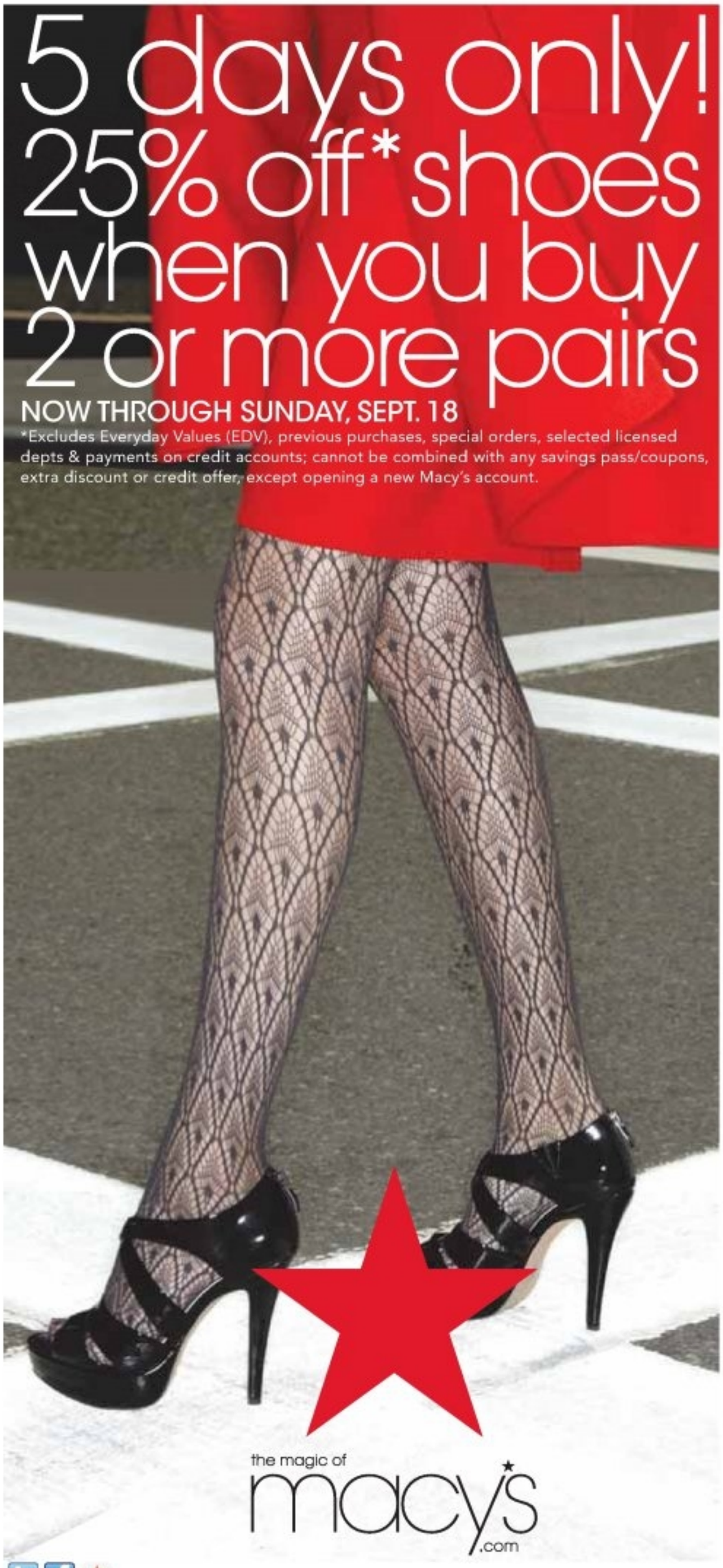
The number of Americans living below the poverty line rose to a record 46 million last year, the government said yesterday, underscoring the challenges facing President Barack Obama and Congress as they try to tackle high unemployment and a moribund economy. REUTERS

Greenspan: Tax reform

WASHINGTON. Former Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan called for tax reform to be part of an urgent effort to put the U.S. economy back on track.

"Tax reform is a major part of any fiscal reform," he told a Senate panel."

Greenspan endorsed tax and entitlement reform recommendations made last year by the White House's bipartisan commission. REUTERS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US Embassy attacked in Afghanistan

Taliban fighters fired rockets at the U.S. Embassy and NATO headquarters in Kabul yesterday and attacked police in three other areas in the biggest assault the insurgent group has mounted on the Afghan capital.

At least nine people were killed and 23 wounded in the four attacks, and a gunbattle around a half-built high-rise building raged on into the evening as NATO and Afghan attack helicopters circled overhead.

The fighters had chosen a strategic and heavily fortified main target for the well-coordinated attacks.

Their ability to shower artillery around the diplomatic district was a clear show of strength at a time when NATO-led forces are claiming significant security gains and preparing for their exit by 2014.

Although the Taliban have attacked multiple targets in Kabul in the past, this is the first time they have organized simultaneous assaults on such separate areas. REUTERS

Quoted

"The scale of today's attack is unprecedented."
ANDREW EXUM, FELLOW AT THE CENTER FOR A NEW AMERICAN SECURITY

ALEX GALLARDO/REUTERS

▶ Microsoft Windows President Steven Sinofsky introduces the new tablet running a test version of Windows 8.

Windows 8 unveiled

Microsoft handed out 5,000 Samsung tablet computers running a test version of Windows 8 at its annual developer conference yesterday, hoping to stoke excitement over its new operating system that includes features tailored for touch screens and tablets. REUTERS

Man who said he was abducted by aliens dies

Charles Hickson, the Mississippi man who claimed he was abducted and probed by aliens while he was fishing with a friend in 1973 and never backed off the story despite the ridicule he endured, has died.

Hickson, 80, died last Friday of a heart attack, his family said yesterday.

Hickson, then 42, was fishing with 19-year-old Calvin Parker Jr. on a pier near Pascagoula, Miss., in October 1973 when they said a cigar-shaped UFO with flashing blue lights suddenly appeared above them.

Although Hickson was reluctant to share the story, he and Parker eventually went to local police and reported the incident. REUTERS

"They weren't lying. Whatever it was, it was real to them."
CHIEF INVESTIGATOR FOR JACKSON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Senate panel backs Pentagon budget freeze

WASHINGTON. A Senate panel yesterday approved defense spending of about $630 billion for the 2012 fiscal year, freezing the Pentagon's base budget at $513 billion for a second straight year while seeking nearly $118 billion for U.S. wars abroad.

The $513 billion Pentagon base budget would be $26 billion less than requested by President Barack Obama and nearly $20 billion less than approved by the House of Representatives. REUTERS

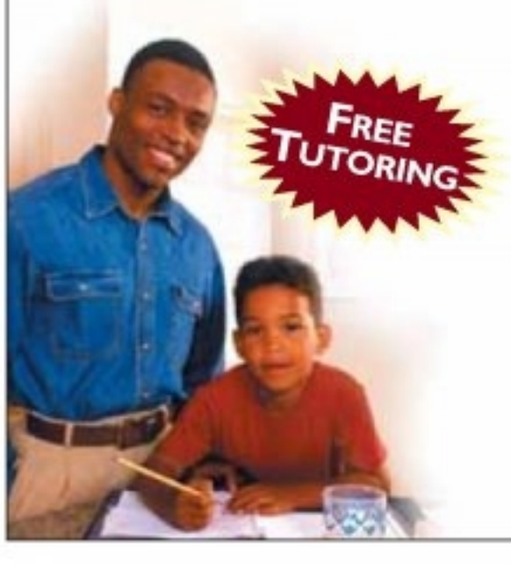
Does your child need extra help in school?

FOCUS On Children
Boston Public Schools

Who is eligible for SES? Parents with a child in one of the schools listed in this ad who is eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. There are 31 different qualified providers to choose from for tutoring, each offering different programs at different places and for different amounts of time.

Two additional tutoring agencies have been added as options for the 2011-2012 school year. **Tutors for All** (option# 30) and **Kinetic Potential Scholars** (option# 31). Currently, these providers are not listed on the new 2011-2012 SES application. Parents can choose these providers by writing these option numbers onto their SES applications.

The Boston Public Schools is a provider too! The 60-hour BPS programs are based at the schools listed in this ad. For general questions, please contact: **The Office of Accountability, Boston Public Schools, 26 Court Street, Boston, MA 02108; Phone: 617-635-6810** or visit the BPS website: **www.bostonpublicschools.org** and click on Resources → For Families.



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Chittick	Guild	Kenny	Ohrenberger	Winthrop
Clap	Haley	Manning	Philbrick	
Condon	Harvard/Kent	Marshall	Quincy Upper	
Conley	Hennigan	Mather	Roosevelt	

Elementary/Middle Schools

Curley K-8	Hurley	Lyndon	Murphy	Warren-Prescott
S. Greenwood	Jackson-Mann K-8	McKay	Perry	Young Achievers
Hernandez	Kilmer	Mission Hill	Tobin	

Middle Schools

Dearborn	Frederick	McCormack	Timilty	Umana
Edwards	Irving	Rogers		

Middle/High Schools
Quincy Upper

High Schools

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US plan takes aim at heart disease

Million Hearts program brings together government and private industry to tackle preventable deaths

U.S. health officials are teaming up with insurance companies, pharmacies, health providers and community groups in a campaign to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes over five years.

The plan announced yesterday by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and several partners, will focus on reducing risk factors through smoking prevention, blood pressure and cholesterol control, and increased use of low-dose aspirin to prevent blood clots. HHS plans to kick in $200 million in new and redirected funds toward the project.

The effort builds on strides in preventing heart disease deaths in the United States, which have fallen by 50 percent between 1980 and 2000. Currently, every year more than 2 million Americans have a heart attack or stroke, and more than 800,000 of them die, according to an editorial in the New England Journal of Medicine. REUTERS

"Heart disease causes 1 of every 3 American deaths and constitutes 17 percent of overall national health spending."
HHS SECRETARY KATHLEEN SEBELIUS

Diabetes challenge

LONDON. The number of people living with diabetes has soared to 366 million, and the disease kills one person every seven seconds, posing a "massive challenge" to health care systems worldwide, experts said yesterday.

The vast majority of those with the disease have Type 2 — the kind linked to poor diet, obesity and lack of exercise. REUTERS

▶ The Million Hearts program will focus on helping Americans make healthy choices, such as preventing tobacco use and lowering consumption of salt and trans fats.

Study: IUDs may lessen ovarian cancer risk

LONDON. Contrary to popular belief, intrauterine contraceptive devices might actually protect women against developing cervical cancer even though they don't stop the infection that commonly leads to the disease, according to the results of an international study.

While IUDs are unlikely to be recommended as a way of preventing cervical cancer, the research should reassure women and their doctors that using them carries no added risk of the disease.

Researchers who studied 20,000 women found that those with a history of using IUDs were no less likely than women who don't to contract HPV, but they had only around half the risk of developing the cancer itself. REUTERS

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THE WORD

Metro's **Dorothy Robinson** shares her take on the world of gossip @dorothyatmetro dorothy.robinson@metro.us

The feed ...

▶ **Checking in with some of Hollywood's biggest names to see what they've been up to — in their own words, in 140 characters or fewer.**

Jessica Simpson is looking for direction, Sarah Silverman hasn't been enjoying the Toronto International Film Festival, Donald Glover has a soft spot for hipsters, and Seth MacFarlane is enjoying his success.

▶ **@JessicaSimpson** What kind of music would y'all want from me on my next album? Thinking about going back to the studio

▶ **@SarahK Silverman:** I'm pretty much done watching actors & actresses pensively looking out windows

▶ **@DonaldGlover** I'm enjoying these girls dressed like faux tomboys in the 70s.

▶ **@SethMacFarlane** Wow- I hit a million followers and Twitter sent me a pink Cadillac.

Jessica Simpson

Megan Fox: 'I lost too much weight'

Megan Fox tells Amica magazine that she has dropped too many pounds, so she's ditching her vegan diet. "For a year and a half, until about four months ago, I followed a strict vegan diet based on raw fruits and vegetables, no bread, sugar and coffee," she says. "But I had lost too much weight."

WWW.METRO.US/WORD
DOROTHY ROBINSON'S WORD BLOG

▶ Megan Fox attended the Toronto International Film Festival last week.

Say what you will about Fox, but that has got to be the first time any starlet has ever admitted to being too skinny.

Speaking of numbers, the actress also says she is totally up for being a mom, but first she needs to pad out her bank account. "I want to have children. I've always wanted kids," she says. "I have a number in my mind of what amount of money I want in the bank so that I can protect my child's future."

Hmmm. I wonder if that number has less to do with how much she has saved and is more about "what I, Megan Fox, will command from a major motion picture before I sabotage a career based on looks by having a child."

STEPHEN LOVEKIN/GETTY IMAGES FOR THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY

Movie. Premiere

▶ From left: Olivia Munn, Greg Kinnear, Sarah Jessica Parker and Christina Hendricks attend Monday's "I Don't Know How She Does It" premiere.

This is how she does it

You know what's a great way for Sarah Jessica Parker to hide the fact that she has a large nose? Make sure she stands next to Christina Hendricks' cleavage. Here are the two actresses at the premiere of their new movie, "I Don't Know How She Does It," on Monday in New York City.

Eva Longoria speaks the truth

Eva Longoria admits it's a little too soon after her split from **Tony Parker** to think about settling down again. "I'm not opposed to it, I just don't really give it a lot of thought," Longoria tells Access Hollywood. "Ask a woman after divorce if she's going to get married, you won't get an honest answer."

Talking points

Aguilera stays on

Producers behind reality singing competition "The Voice" have no plans to ditch judge **Christina Aguilera**, despite rumors that the singer isn't going to be part of the show's second season. "There is absolutely no truth to the rumor," NBC's **Paul Telegdy** says in an official statement. Aguilera is still under contract for Season 2, which premieres in February.

▶ Aguilera

Madonna pokes fun at herself

Madonna is making the most out of her "I hate hydrangeas" gaffe from the Venice International Film Festival. The singer has released a video on YouTube showing her, in silent film style, apologizing to a bouquet. "You have no idea how many nights I have lost thinking how I hurt you. Words cannot express how sorry I am," the subtitles read, until the tone changes and she lashes out at the flowers. "I still hate hydrangeas! And I will always hate them! It's a free country! So f— you, I like roses," the video says as Madonna screams and stomps on the hydrangeas.

▶ Madonna

▶ Prince Harry

Harry rakes in the dough

If the whole royal family or military thing doesn't work out, **Prince Harry** could have a career in finance. The 26-year-old royal set a record for closing the largest foreign exchange deal while manning the phones during a charity event, completing a $24.5 billion swap between Barclays London and a European counterpart, according to the London Metro. Harry earned $9,000 commission for the effort, which he plans to donate to charity.

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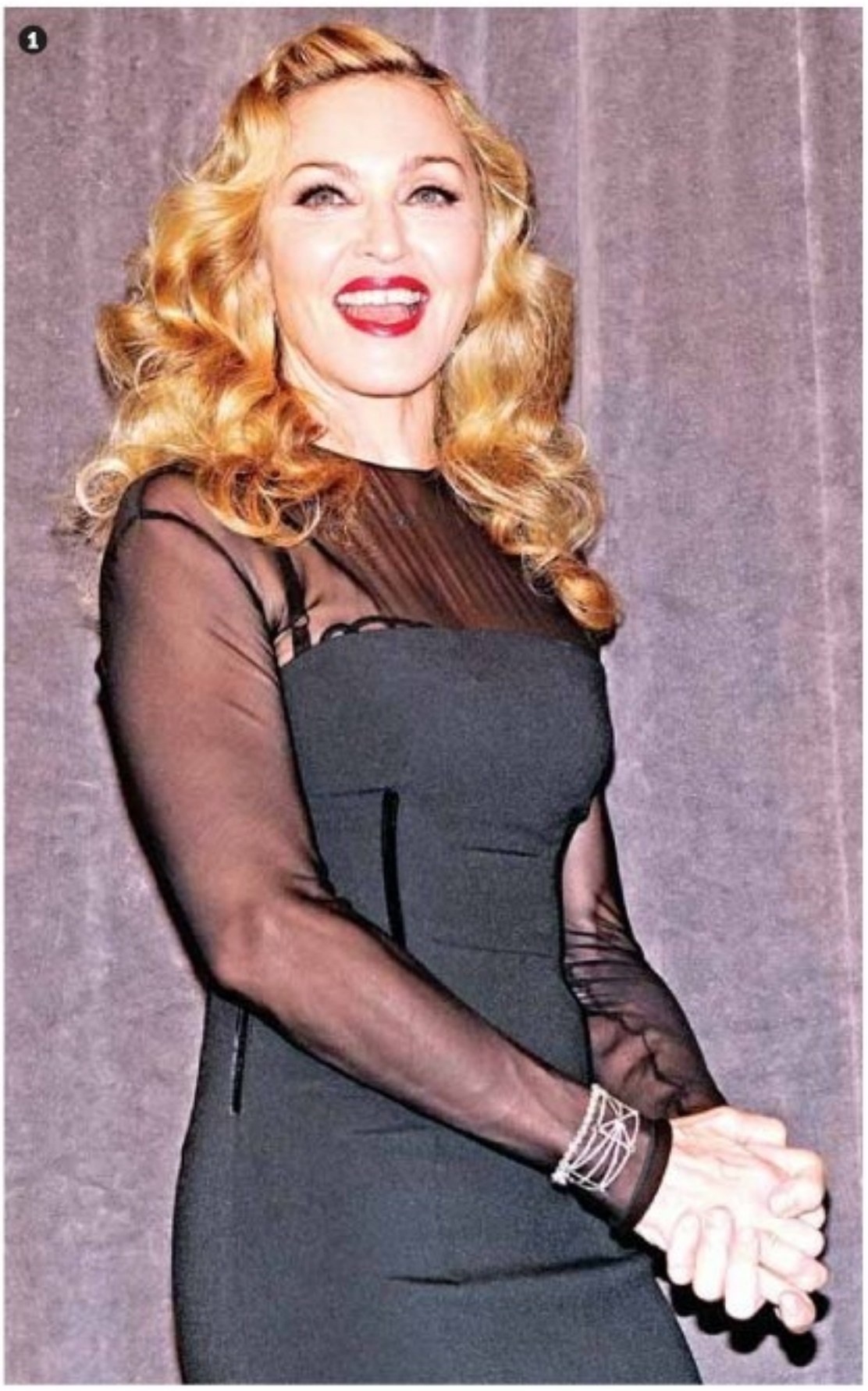

1: Madonna spoke onstage at the 'W.E.' premiere at TIFF Bell Lightbox during the 2011 Toronto International Film Festival on Monday in Toronto, Canada.

2: Uh-oh. Is this going to be a new collaboration? Lenny Kravitz and Gwyneth Paltrow hugged at an after-party following Kravitz's gig with Absolute Radio, which launched his new album "Black and White America" in London on Monday.

3: Lea Michele glammed it up at the FOX Fall-Eco Casino Party (the name of that party makes no sense) on Monday in Culver City, Calif.

4: Hugh Jackman (Hahahaha! Look at that little bike!) is seen riding away from an interview at BBC Radio One yesterday in London.

5: Jenna Dewan-Tatum and Justin Long attended the "Ten Year" premiere at Ryerson Theatre during the 2011 Toronto International Film Festival on Monday in Toronto.

6: Actress Vanessa Paradis (aka Johnny Depp's baby mama) attended the "Cafe De Flore" premiere at the 2011 Toronto International Film Festival on Monday.

7: Coco and Ice-T attended The Paley Center For Media Presents "Planet Rock: The Story of Hip-Hop & the Crack Generation" at The Paley Center for Media on Monday in New York City.

1. KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE
2. DAVE M. BENETT/GETTY IMAGES
3. FREDERICK M. BROWN/GETTY IMAGES
4. NEIL MOCKFORD/FILMMAGIC
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What's with all the insurance ads?

On top of the glut of insurance companies in America, each of them has at least two separate ad campaigns

From geckos to mayhem, what's with the overkill?

There's the "Mayhem" guy for Allstate, the Geico Gecko, Flo — the overly enthusiastic Progressive saleslady — and the equally perky "Nationwide is on your side" guy. But wait! Then there's also Dennis Haysbert for Allstate, the Rod Serling Geico guy, the Messenger dude from Progressive and Dale Earnhardt Jr. for Nationwide.

Overkill? Some of us may think so, but Joel Ohman, financial planner and founder of Carinsurancecomparison.com, informs us that there's actually a reason for such an oversaturation of insurance advertising.

"One unique thing about insurance marketing is that there are so many different demographics that can be targeted," Ohman says. "Anyone age 16 and up that drives a car is usually in the market for at least car insurance. This is one reason why car insurance companies have so many different ad campaigns — so that they can reach many different demographics."

▶ Allstate's "Mayhem" campaign

Flo, the Progressive insurance lady

Many credit Geico for the demonstrable shift to multiple ad campaigns — including Ricardo de la Blanca, CEO of global marketing agency DLB Group.

"Warren Buffett is a person that really understands the power of marketing, and he was always pushing the company to do more with marketing," de la Blanca says of the billionaire who owns Geico insurance's parent company, Berkshire Hathaway.

The Gecko ad campaign was launched in 2000, four years after Buffett took over at Geico. Two years later, the company had 5 million policyholders. Geico enlisted cavemen and the Rod Serling guy to hawk their services soon after; today, the company boasts over 10 million clients.

Now it seems like competing insurance companies are rushing to grab some of that business with their own multi-spokesmen approach.

HEIDI PATALANO
heidi.patalano@metro.us

Right from the source

We asked Allstate spokeswoman Jaclyn Darrohn if the "Mayhem" and Dennis Haysbert "Truth About Insurance" campaigns were a reaction to Geico's multiple campaigns.

▶ "The launch of the 'Mayhem' and 'Truth About Insurance' campaigns were not developed as a reaction to what our competitors are doing, rather a strategic shift to reinforce the value message to consumers," she says. "The insurance category is increasingly competitive and Allstate strives to market to current and prospective customers in relevant ways."

The Geico Gecko

TAG theater & arts guide

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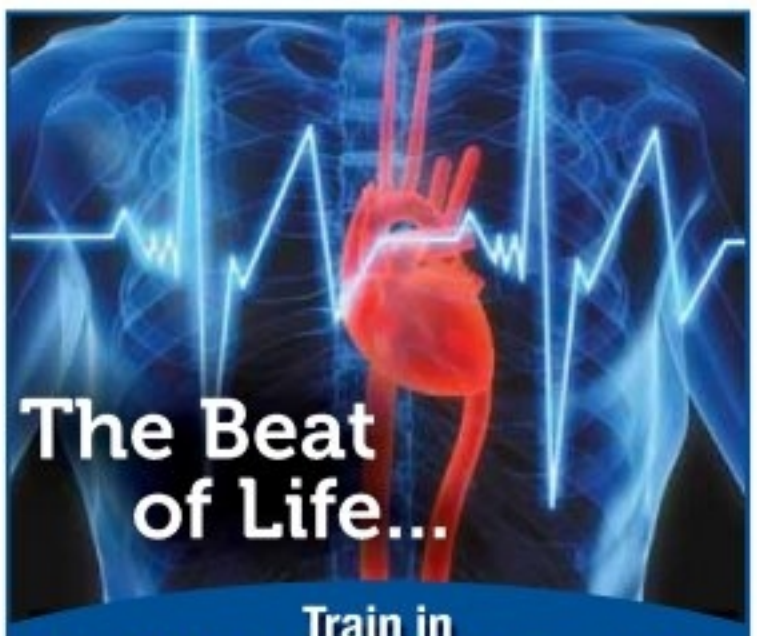

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Don't stop till you get 'Enough'

'How Much' does the Foundry Theatre's latest work brings the audience into the action? As much as you allow The performers even went and got a 'Googler'

PAUL MARIOTTA

Erwin Thomas, standing, brings the audience on the act.

The question-and-answer portion of ArtsEmerson's latest production, "How Much is Enough," doesn't come after the current call. The entire show revolves around questions.

Equally unconventional, performers pose the questions to the audience — not vice versa.

"We wanted to make a play out of questions, while also exploring the idea of value," says director Melanie Joseph. "We're looking for a way to build an opportunity for people to listen to each other."

Rehearsals for the play had to be conducted in front of a live audience, and every night the show comes out different, what with so much depending on the insight of playgoers.

Shy folk need not worry about forced public revelation, assures Joseph: "Participation is voluntary. We've never had any problems, surprisingly. People have been eager to share."

Joseph doesn't want to risk divulging too much about the "experience" of the show, but does mention that the questions all in one way or another relate to the concept of value: "They're silly and deep and personal and global," she adds.

Though this will be the world premiere of "How Much is Enough," the company behind the interactive show — the Foundry Theatre — has a history of unorthodox performance. They've staged work on a bus, in restaurants and yes, even a few times in "proper" venues, says Joseph.

What's a Googler?

There are three performers in the play, plus a "Googler" who looks up facts and figures to further explore audience answers throughout the show.

If you go

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TV watch list

TRAE PATTON/NBC

▶ "Up All Night"

'Up All Night'

COMEDY. Christina Applegate and Will Arnett play new parents attempting to keep some semblance of their cool former lives — not to mention their sanity — after the baby arrives. Both actors are comedy pros who have great chemistry as the totally recognizable couple simply trying to be the best mom and dad they can be — which of course results in plenty of funny situations (like hangover diaper changes).

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AMBER RAY

MTV2 must-see

The fierce LFL ladies are back for the 2011-2012 season! Watch Orlando Fantasy take on Baltimore Charm this Friday at 10 p.m., live on MTV2.

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Do you fancy Dancy?

He once got personalized pajamas from the Toronto Film Festival But despite this year's lack of free gifts, actor Hugh Dancy is back at the fest

Hugh Dancy has been keeping busy. After a scene-stealing supporting role in this summer's "Our Idiot Brother," Dancy brings two distinctly different films to TIFF. First, he stars alongside Elizabeth Olsen in the harrowing Sundance favorite "Martha Marcy Mae Marlene." Later in the fest, he'll be debuting "Hysteria," about the development of the first vibrator. Metro caught up with British actor for this year's festival.

You have a couple of films here at the festival.

I'm leaving in between the two of them, so it feels like two festivals. I'll just come back with a whole new set of clothes. And ["Hysteria"] I haven't seen, so that's a strange experience. I thought, "Well I can try and watch it before, but at this point, when it's three days away, what's the point?"

▶ Hugh Dancy makes the rounds at this year's Toronto Film Festival.

GETTY IMAGES

So you're seeing it here?

Yes. ... I will be doing press about it before I've actually seen it, which is always an odd experience. You're saying, "Yes, I love my co-workers, they're deeply sensitive individuals." ... But I haven't got a clue.

We get a lot of quotes like that about actors working together.

Well, it's unfortunately, boringly true that the majority of people you work with are nice. ... It takes somebody to be a real prick to kind of throw things off-balance.

Will you have any time to see anything else while here?

I think the only thing I will get to see is "The Descendants." That's about it. I've been to TIFF twice ... but when I came the first time — which would've been four years ago — I arrived in my hotel room to find a pair of pristine, white pajamas with my name stitched into the pocket — "Hugh." It was very sweet. I still own them. It was from the festival. That's how this festival has changed! Where are my pajamas?

Maybe they're saving them for when you come back for 'Hysteria.'

Yes, that's right. "Hysteria" is definitely more of a pajamas kind of a movie.

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Fashion week reviews

1 Marc by Marc Jacobs
It's well known that Jacobs has had a lot on his plate lately, with his rumored negotiations with Christian Dior and all. Maybe that explains the simpler than usual approach to his spring collection, which featured preppy sportswear classics in navy and Kelly green with lots of neon mixed in. It was all kind of "club kid leaves the raves to go to college." The brights were the stars of the show. It wasn't his most earth-shatteringly creative collection for his secondary line, but will probably be a retail hit nonetheless. (Who doesn't want a piece of Marc?) KENYA HUNT

1

2 Rodarte
With Taylor Swift, Beyonce and Solange Knowles, Dakota and Elle Fanning, Kim Gordon and David Byrne all sitting front row (yes, all of them) it could have been easy for the guests to steal the spotlight from the clothes. But there was no looking away from Kate and Laura Mulleavy's innovative, yet wearable clothes. The dresses were textured, crinkled, gathered and draped, each one more ornately constructed than the next. But more than anything, the Mulleavy sisters deserve a hug for giving us a break from the sea of Easter egg colors we've seen this week. A girl can only take but so much pink and yellow. Instead, they worked in a rich color palette that included marigold, aqua, almond, silver and gold. METRO/KH

3 Alice + Olivia
Astroturf, fancy wrought iron benches, champagne and cupcakes created a garden party setting for Stacey Bendet's spring collection. This season the designer looked to the "colors of Palm Beach in the 1960s" and the sophistication of the 1940s. (For more on her inspirations and an inside look at the presentation, watch our video at www.metro.us.) Whatever her starting point, Bendet's line, as usual, embodies her carefree, fun spirit. She even did a version of the funky, vertical-striped pants that put her on the map. There were flirty dresses in lively corals, sky blues and floral prints; silhouettes ranged from A-line minis to strapless and fitted to flouncy. Most looks came cinched at the waist, above the knee and embellished with sequins. These are numbers for girls with an active social calendar to frolic in — perfect for all the PYTs like Kourtney Kardashian, Eva Amurri and Lydia Hearst in attendance. TINA CHADHA

2

3

4 Herve Leger
It must be hard to keep putting a new spin on the bandage dress, but to their credit, designers Max and Lubov Azria find ways. This season they worked with weaving and braiding in metallics and tribal prints. The show opened with warriorlike gold foil dresses featuring intricate cutouts and braided strap detailing that felt more "Mad Max," less red carpet. This was the problem with some of the looks with fringe and weaving — they seemed too fantastical for real life. But there were black and white options, however, that read fresh and sexy for those women searching for a good party dress. METRO/TC

4

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mywellbeing

Not so fly: Sex pills fail quality tests

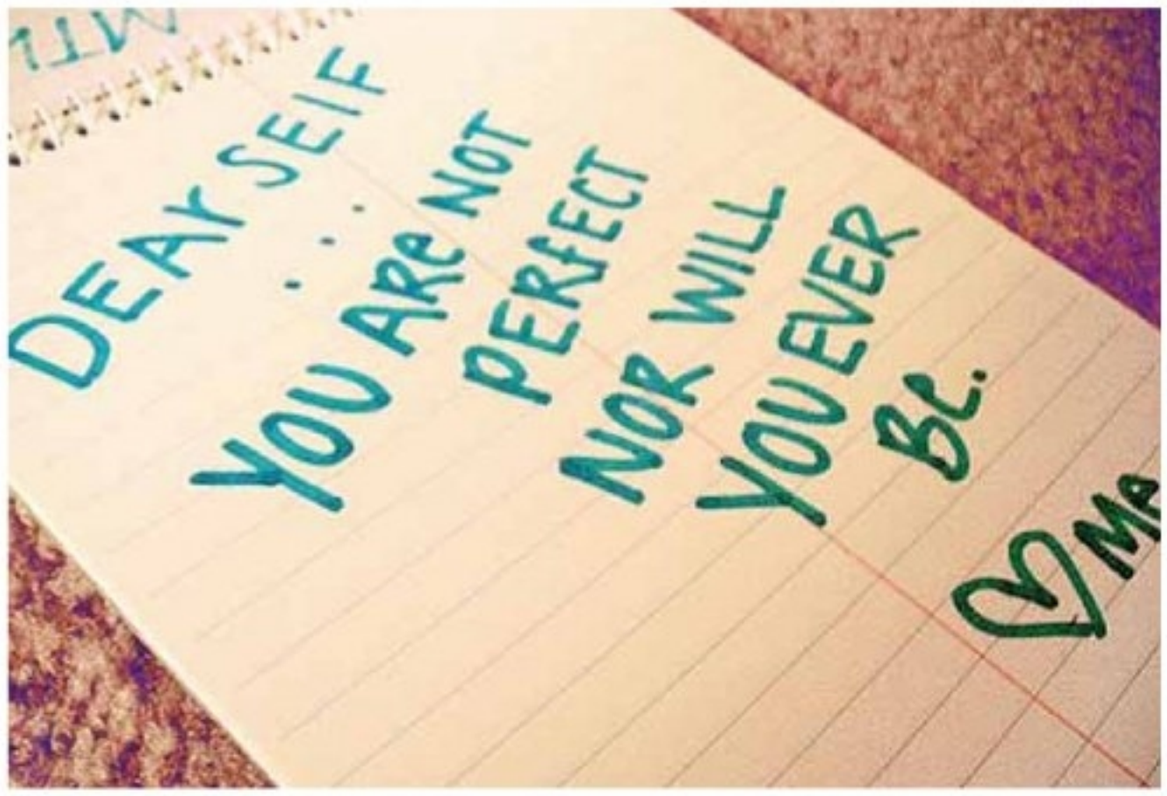
Only 30 percent of the male sexual enhancement supplements ConsumerLab.com reviewed passed their quality tests. Four products had less of a significant ingredient than was reported, two products were missing FDA-required information on their labels and one product had an unsafe level of lead. Pills were tested for l-arginine, yohimbe and "horny goat weed" — three ingredients of many natural sex supplements.

METRO/ME

Sorry, boys.

How to fight flawlessness

What's the difference between doing your best and taking things too far? Combat the perfectionist in you



No more drama

JONATHAN ALPERT
WWW.JONATHANALPERT.COM

The question:

I've been called a perfectionist by a lot of people, and they are probably right. I tend to obsess over things and push for perfect all the time. Case in point: It took me way too long just to write this question. What is perfectionism, and how can I do less of it?

Perfectionism isn't about getting it right or being perfect; rather, it's a perpetual quest to find what's wrong with something. For example, one may look at what others consider a beautiful piece of art and find flaws in it. Ultimately, a perfectionist needs to embrace the concept that there's no such thing as perfect. Things can be just good or just OK.

Early on, a perfectionist may have been given mixed messages from parents: "Good job … but you can do better." Or "Getting a B is good but an A is better." This simultaneous criticism and praise sends a mixed message to the child and there's a drive to satisfy the parent and do better, even when things by most standards are fine. Over time, a person becomes mired in this thinking. Depression and anxiety develop, and relationships can take a hit.

Here's how to be less perfect:

Change your narrative. Rather than looking at something's negative aspects, perceived deficits and shortcomings, look at the positive traits and what you know to be fact. Lower your standards and come up with new and acceptable ones.

Revaluate your goals. Make them reasonable and be flexible.

Kill the dichotomous thinking. Accept the notion that there are more options than just perfect and imperfect. By seeing the countless shades of gray between black and white, you'll expand your thinking; this can benefit you.

Ask yourself: When is enough, enough? Embrace and normalize being OK.

Go ahead and get really messy and dirty. Make mistakes, loosen up your thinking and prove to yourself that you're still fine.

– Jonathan Alpert is a licensed psychotherapist. E-mail him your questions at jonathan@jonathanalpert.com

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▶ He might be strong, but is he in the best physical health?

Bulk up on muscle health

Ginormous guns shouldn't be the goal ◐ What happens when you overdo it ◐ Rethink your proteins

There's more to muscle health than building and strengthening. Of course, strong muscles aid movement and provide proper support to hold the skeleton erect and aligned. But bulking up muscles too much can cause the opposite effect. It's important to keep your muscles at their fittest — without overstretching things.

"Muscles are what moves us. Every movement is about our muscles," says Jenn Coia, LMT, who works at Manhattan's Spa Merge. "I used to work at a gym when I was in massage school. I'd see these guys with big, hulking muscles and they could barely move. They're decreasing their range of motion of every joint. If you can't move, then you're having to compensate for what should be a natural range of motion."

The result can be injury, ranging from tightness and soreness in other areas to joint wear and postural problems, including restriction of blood flow or even nerve damage. "That's why yoga and Pilates took off. They allow you to build toned muscles, but they allow you to be functional," says Coia.

As a massage therapist, Coia works to heal and prevent further injury on sore and damaged muscles. "If there's an injury, it can help with the healing of scar tissue by aligning muscle fibers."

The muscle needs time to repair with simple rest, too. "If you overstretch a muscle, you create micro-tears. That muscle will heal itself because it's just a micro-injury. But you've pushed too hard and need to recover."

LINDA CLARKE
letters@metro.us

What to eat

High-protein diets are synonymous with muscle-building, but "high-protein diets put a strain on the filtering organs," says Coia. "A balanced diet is always the healthiest choice."

GETTY IMAGES

Study. Alcohol

▶ This might explain all that drunk-dialing.

This is your brain on booze. Any questions?

Why do we act like fools when we drink too much? New research out of the University of Missouri found that alcohol weakens the power of our brain's "signal" that tells us we're making a mistake, and also lessens our concern about said errors. "Our study isn't the first to show that alcohol reduces this alarm signal; but contrary to previous studies, our study shows that alcohol doesn't reduce your awareness of mistakes — it reduces how much you care about making those mistakes," says Bruce Bartholow, associate professor of psychology at MU. METRO/ME

myletters&games

Letters

letters@metro.us

Corporations care about us

RE: "TEA PARTY: FOR THE RICH ONLY": May I suggest you take an American history class and learn facts before making ridiculous accusations about the Tea Party. These "greedy profiteering corporations" are what employ Americans. From McDonald's to Wal-Mart, they give people jobs — which is what we all need right now. Punishing companies will just stop any progress in this country. Maybe you would like to consider moving to Cuba.
JUSTIN CLEARY, VIA E-MAIL

Time to mine rich's wealth

RE: "OBAMA: LET'S AVOID POLITICAL GAMES": Finally a jobs plan implemented by Obama that seems promising. Eliminating $467 billion in tax breaks for the wealthy and using that money to fund a job proposal isn't such a bad idea. Its about time the wealthier Americans dig into their pockets and help.
RICARDO CUMMINGS, VIA E-MAIL

Bieber needs a new look

The picture on the front page of 9/12/11 Metro of Justin Bieber looks like a very young Jane Fonda. If that's what his new style is, he should change.
MAUREEN MANNING, S. WEYMOUTH

Liberators are also terrorists

RE: "NO PACIFIST EVER LIBERATED A DEATH CAMP": Two things: (1) No practicing pacifist ever created a death camp. (2) The people who liberated the death camps in 1945 are the same people who, less than a century earlier, slaughtered Native Americans so white colonizers could mine for gold.
CRAIG SHOEMAKE , VIA E-MAIL

Why blame the victim?

RE: "VIOLENCE IS THE ANSWER": Open mouth, insert foot. You really laid an egg by saying women's scanty clothes provoke rape! They may provoke active harassment by men — I've always called wearing scanty clothes passive harassment by women. But rape is altogether different: It's about not sex, but power and violence.
J. ANDREW SMITH, VIA E-MAIL

So we should blame the murder victim because they were in the wrong place at the wrong time? We should blame the person whose house was robbed because it was so inviting, instead of the thief? You apparently don't think much of personal responsibility.
SARA MINOR, VIA E-MAIL

E-mail your letters: **letters@metro.us**
Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words. Metro reserves the right to edit all letters. Please include your name and contact information.

Horoscope

♍ Virgo **Aug. 23-Sept. 22.** You won't find a better day to sort out a problem that's been on your mind. You should easily be able to take it apart and find the intrinsic clues that will lead you to the perfect solution.
♎ Libra **Sept. 23-Oct. 23.** Don't take any wild risks, but do follow any instincts and/or hunches pertaining to your financial dealings. Your perceptions are better than usual.
♏ Scorpio **Oct. 24-Nov. 22.** Immediately disassociate yourself from any negative-thinkers. Instead, associate yourself with those you believe to be lucky. Some of their good instincts will rub off on you.
♐ Sagittarius **Nov. 23-Dec. 21.** Sublime conditions will quickly replace any leftover negativity that you wake up with. Be on your toes, because anticipation will help you spot opportunities and gain much power.
♑ Capricorn **Dec. 22-Jan. 19.** After a bumpy start, Lady Luck will look extremely kindly on you. This will be especially true in areas where you are able to express your personal creativity.
♒ Aquarius **Jan. 20-Feb. 19.** Be particularly watchful for developments that would enhance your financial well-being and position. This could be a better than usual time for you.
♓ Pisces **Feb. 20-March 20.** Good news is on its way pertaining to one of your personal interests. Be sure to take advantage of it in a manner that would enhance all possibilities.
♈ Aries **March 21-April 19.** It behooves you to focus your efforts and energies on work-related issues that can yield you a large profit and/or enhance your material interests in some manner.
♉ Taurus **April 20-May 20.** Certain friends and contacts could be luckier for you than usual. Hang out with those who provide you with fun and have an interest in your affairs.
♊ Gemini **May 21-June 20.** If you need some type of help or assistance, turn to those who you know have the expertise you require. If there is one person in particular whom you've previously aided, go to him or her first.
♋ Cancer **June 21-July 22.** You should put aside whatever is bothering you and turn toward optimism and accomplishment. You stand a good chance of succeeding.
♌ Leo **July 23-Aug. 22.** No one is better than you at sorting out critical issues in ways that are advantageous to yourself and others. Use your gifts to handle something very important. **BERNICE BEDE OSOL**

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Across
1 Kind of recall
6 Pilots' sightings
10 Cornfield robber
14 Bring cheer
15 Zilch
16 Exude moisture
17 Fruit stand item
18 Orderly
19 Physics particle
20 Go from flower to flower
22 Change a bill
23 Explorer Ponce de __
24 Will not
26 Compete for
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31 Trim a doily
32 White vestment
33 Giant-ant horror film
34 Raises
38 Midwest st.
40 Chromosome material
42 Not often seen
43 Prose pieces
46 Run in neutral
49 Muscle spasm
50 Caesar's man
51 Bon Ami rival
52 Top NCO
53 Solar event
57 Foot part
59 Meadow feature
60 Sticker
65 Funny __ Buzzi
66 Cattle-call reward
67 Jungian term
68 Peter Gunn's girl
69 Economist __ Greenspan
70 Clumsy
71 Take care of
72 Bulk
73 Pastor's abode

Down
1 Work part-time
2 Tub in the fridge
3 Statuesque
4 Coral formation
5 Easy-going
6 Raw, as hides
7 __ accompli
8 More peculiar
9 Voice an opinion
10 Carpooler
11 Bounders
12 Endangered layer
13 Makes one's way
21 Webster or Beery
22 Distant
25 Riviera summer
26 Barn topper
27 Henri's aits
28 Subsides
30 "__ vincit amor"
35 Tabbies or calicos
36 Math course
37 Splinter group
39 Enthralled
41 Next to
44 Kennel sounds
45 Almost-grads
47 Escapade
48 Cry out
53 Everglades wader
54 Unrefined
55 Forum speech
56 Quebec school
58 Redhead's tint
61 Viking name
62 Good, in Guatemala
63 Foul callers
64 Appraise
66 Bleacher shout

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SUDOKU **LEVEL: HARD**

Solution to yesterday's crossword

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How to play Sudoku: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

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Eagles' O-line must improve ... quickly

National analysis

Beneath the spectacular athletic display by Mike Vick in the Eagles' 31-13 Week 1 win over the Rams lurked a flaw that could cripple Philadelphia's chances of making a serious Super Bowl run.

The Eagles' free-agent spending spree did little to help the offensive line. And it showed against the Rams, as a unit featuring three brand new starters appeared to lack cohesion and continuity.

The Eagles struggled with the crowd noise all afternoon, and failed to deal with the Rams' blitz. The deplorable line play often left Vick to run for his life.

FOOTBALL NATION

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▶ Vick

Despite accounting for almost 300 yards, the QB was sacked three times.

Success this season is contingent on keeping Vick upright. If the first game was indicative of future performance, the "Dream Team" might be doomed. JESSE KLAPPER

Fast tempo led to Brady's record day

Patriots have Dolphins gasping for air Monday night ◗ That was definitely part of the game plan

Get this: Before Monday night's ridiculous 517-yard, four-touchdown performance, Tom Brady had only thrown for more than 400 yards once (once!) in his entire career.

And he needed overtime to do it.

Not even in 2007, when the Pats broke just about every NFL offensive record, did it occur. It happened back in 2002, when the Pats beat the Chiefs in OT at Gillette Stadium, 41-38, thanks to Brady's 410 passing yards and four TDs.

So much for old age catching up, huh?

Of course the 99-yard touchdown to Wes Welker padded the passing stats, but that throw was perfectly executed and placed in exactly the right spot for Welker to catch it on the run.

And it was just one of the many that were.

The Pats had the Dolphins defense lining up at the oxygen tanks Monday night, when many assumed it would be New England gasping for air. The reason was the fast-paced approach the Pats took — one that has worked for years with Brady under center.

906

Tom Brady and Dolphins QB Chad Henne combined for an NFL-record 906 net passing yards Monday night.

"We try to play at a crisp, fast tempo every day," Patriots offensive coordinator Bill O'Brien said yesterday. "Every week is a new week. The tempo changes sometimes from drive to drive, but as a whole we want to play fast; we don't want to play slow.

"So, it's important for me to get the play in quickly and for Tom [Brady] to get the play communicated quickly, and for us to be at the line of scrimmage and ready to go."

Brady connected with eight different receivers Monday.

"The preseason is about playing a lot of different groupings and trying out a lot of different schemes and things like that," O'Brien said. "The preseason is one thing, and the regular season is another thing."

JIMMY TOSCANO
sports@metro.us

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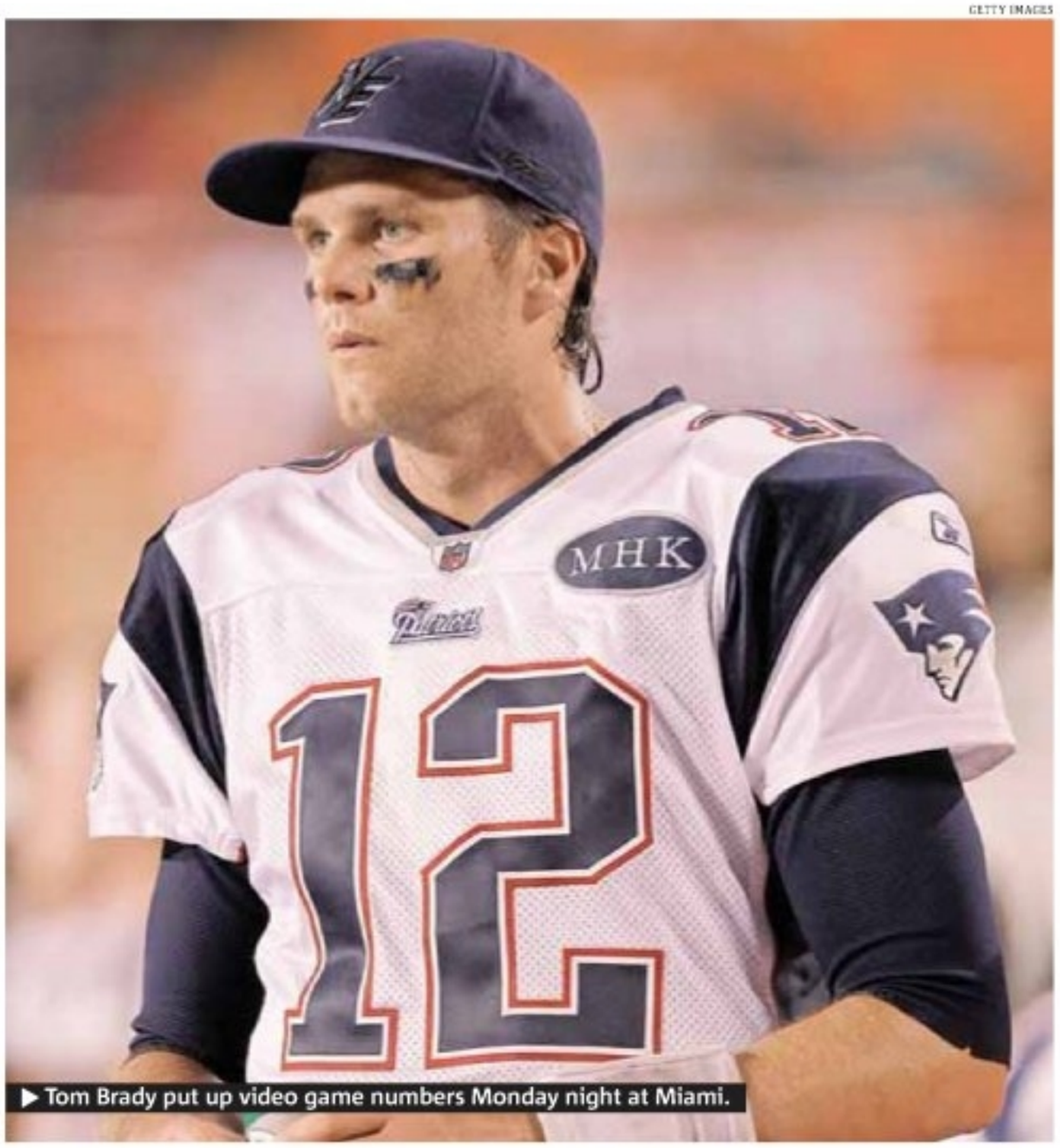

▶ Tom Brady put up video game numbers Monday night at Miami.

"That's one game, and we'll see how it goes in the coming weeks against different competition."
BILL BELICHICK

"There were things that we did well; there were certainly a lot of things we need to improve on."
BILL BELICHICK

"We have to try to make our operation as tight and at as high a level of performance as we possibly can."
BILL BELICHICK

In the NFL

Mangini regrets Spygate

Former Jets head coach Eric Mangini hinted in an interview with WEEI yesterday that he played a role in the "Spygate" controversy. "It's one of those things where the end result wasn't the goal," he said. "My intention was never to hurt [the Pats]." METRO

In college

FSU's Bowden beat cancer

Bobby Bowden overcame prostate cancer in 2007, the legendary former Florida State coach revealed yesterday.

Bowden, who retired after the 2009 season, was treated in secret. He has been in remission for four years.

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▶ Josh Beckett is expected to take a turn in the rotation against the Rays this week.

Good news for Red Sox hurlers

Beckett, Buchholz, Bedard make progress Beckett to make a start this week Bedard possible Monday

On a day Tim Wakefield again went for his 200th career victory, three other Red Sox starters made strides in their quests to return to the rotation.

Josh Beckett's was the most significant. He was declared healthy after spraining his right ankle, and was confirmed as the Sox's starter either Thursday or Friday.

"I said, 'Look, whatever's in your best interest. If you think the extra day helps you even more, we'll push you back,'" manager Terry Francona said. "That's kind of where we're at."

Clay Buchholz's throwing program progressed as he played toss on the field again. He's expected to throw a side session in the Fenway Park bullpen this week — perhaps as early as today.

And Erik Bedard, suffering from knee and lat injuries, closed in on a bullpen session of his own. Francona all but named him as a candidate to start half of Monday's doubleheader against Baltimore. METRO

In and out

The Red Sox got one slugger back last night, but had to scratch another from the lineup.

- **Kevin Youkilis** returned to the lineup after missing three games with hip bursitis and a sports hernia.
- **David Ortiz**, meanwhile, was a late scratch with back spasms. Jed Lowrie pinch hit for him in the bottom of the first inning.

Ramirez facing charge of hitting his wife, 32

Manny Ramirez was released from a Florida jail on bail yesterday, facing charges he slapped his wife during an argument at their home.

The former Red Sox slugger, 39, spent Monday night in Broward County Jail before posting $2,500 bail. He's facing misdemeanor domestic battery charges that carry up to a year in jail.

Ramirez did not speak to reporters outside the jail yesterday.

"No thanks," he said. "Let me see, where's my family?"

His sister drove him away from the jail in a white Cadillac Escalade.

During a court appearance yesterday, Broward County Judge John Hurley ordered Ramirez to have no contact with his wife.

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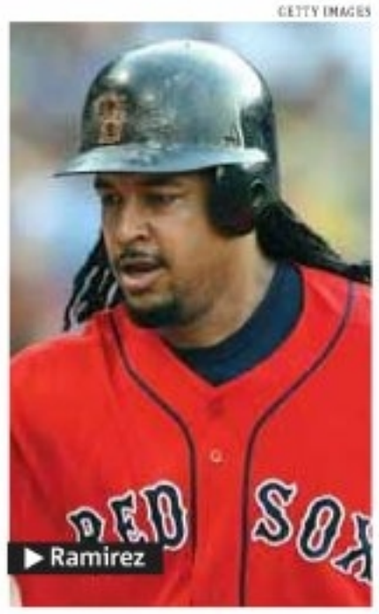

▶ Ramirez

Ramirez reportedly told investigators he "shrugged" Juliana Ramirez, 32, during an argument Monday night, during which she hit her head on their bed's headboard. METRO

911 call

Ramirez's wife, Juliana, called 911 soon after the alleged incident took place.

- **"My husband just hit me,"** Juliana Ramirez says on the tape, released just before Ramirez was released on $2,500 bail.
- **She spoke calmly,** telling the 911 dispatcher that she and Ramirez were still in the house. Juliana Ramirez assured the dispatcher she was safe: "He's not doing anything anymore because he knows I'm calling the police."

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TO LISTEN TO THE CALL AND READ THE TRANSCRIPT

Jenks has embolism

Red Sox reliever Bobby Jenks has been diagnosed with a pulmonary embolism in his back, Terry Francona said yesterday.

The manager said Jenks — currently on the DL — is OK, and the condition is not career-threatening.

A pulmonary embolism is a blockage in the main artery to the lung.

Jenks is on "proper medication," Francona said. METRO

Red Sox add five

The Red Sox yesterday called up five players from the minor leagues.

First baseman Lars Anderson, outfielder Joey Gathright, shortstop Jose Iglesias, lefthanded pitcher Trever Miller and righthanded pitcher Junichi Tazawa are now with the big club.

J.D. Drew was put on the 60-day DL and infielder Nate Spears was designated for assignment to make room. METRO

Charitable Yankees

The Yankees are donating $125,000 to help victims of two recent natural disasters, the team announced yesterday.

The Yankees are giving $100,000 toward relief from Hurricane Irene. That money will be split between the Salvation Army and the Red Cross.

Meanwhile, the Bombers are donating $25,000 to help victims of the Texas wildfires. METRO

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http://healthyhearts.partners.org

BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

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Are you suffering from Diabetes?

You may qualify to participate in a research study on nerve damage (neuropathy) caused by type 2 diabetes.

- The study is performed at the Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Pain Medicine.
- Participation involves an interview and a physical examination.
- We will also take a blood sample and a small skin biopsy.
- The estimated time required is 2½ hours.

Financial compensation will be provided.

For more information, call 617-726-5186

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Are you taking a medication for depression but still feeling sad, down or blue?

Are you interested in trying talk therapy, in addition to your medication?

You may be able to participate in a research study at Massachusetts General Hospital. We are looking at whether brain imaging tests show changes in people who are treated for depression using talk therapy.

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All inquiries will be kept confidential. Call Kate at 1-866-552-5837 and mention "therapy."

Tufts Medical Center

Do you have Psoriasis?

Study volunteers needed

A clinical trial is currently being conducted to determine if an investigational drug taken by mouth will be beneficial for patients with psoriasis.

To participate

- **You must be at least 18 years old**
- **You must have plaque-type psoriasis**
- **You must have psoriasis for at least 12 months before starting the study**
- **You must be a candidate for phototherapy and/or systemic therapy**

Study length is 264 weeks, with 34 office visits and 1 telephone visit. Participants will receive all study-related evaluations and study drug at no cost, and will receive payment for participation.

For more information about this trial or to see if you qualify, please call (617) 636-7462 or email ndonovan1@tuftsmedicalcenter.org

Principal Investigator:
Alice B. Gottlieb, MD, PhD
Chair and Dermatologist-In-Chief
Department of Dermatology
Tufts Medical Center
Boston, MA

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All inquires are confidential. Compensation will be provided.

Please contact Katelyn Trecartin:
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Looking for 60 participants (age > 50 years):

- Group 1: type 2 diabetes mellitus (for > 5 years)
- Group 2: healthy controls (without major health problems)

Study visits include: Overnight stay for 3 days, blood tests, medical and memory examinations, blood flow measurements using ultrasound and MRI.

Stipend: up to $220 for completing the study.

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston

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▶ Time to call up your broker: In 74 percent of the country it's cheaper to buy than rent, according to Trulia.com.

Stop throwing your money away on rent

This adage couldn't be more true than it is right now According to new data, most of the country is currently offering better deals for buying than renting

This might just be the time to purchase a new home.

Recent data from real estate website Trulia.com found that buying is cheaper than renting in 74 percent of the nation's major cities.

In locations such as Las Vegas, Philadelphia and Detroit — where foreclosures have been rampant, unemployment is high and prices have dropped considerably — purchasing a home can mean lower monthly mortgage payments than rents, according to the real estate site.

"With interest rates where they are — and property values really on the very, very low side — it's a good opportunity to buy," informs Joanne Davidow, a vice president at Prudential Fox & Roach in Philadelphia. "A lot of sellers have gotten very real as far as prices are concerned."

The survey compared rents for two-bedroom units to the selling price of two-bedroom properties. In many communities, rents are high and vacancy rates are low because people are squeamish about making a large purchase during a down economy. Many homeowners are opting to bank their money and rent instead of purchasing a new place.

"Prospective homebuyers no longer see homes as a quick moneymaking investment," says Pete Flint, CEO and co-founder of Trulia. "They are proceeding with more caution, asking themselves if they are planning to live in the home for several years, have enough money saved up to make a down payment and can pay a monthly mortgage."

The difference

A look at how the rates of the average two-bedroom unit in NYC compare. At least you're not there.

- Rent per month: **$3,150** to **$3,650**
- Cost to buy: **$1.25** to **$1.35 million**

CHRISTINA WALLACE
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Boston is still pretty pricey

Owning a home may be cheaper in most U.S. cities, but Boston and New York are among the exceptions. They're part of the approximately 12 percent of the nation's cities where renting is still easier on the budget than buying.

Newlyweds Erin and Brian Fleming were hoping to move out of their Boston rental and purchase their first home, but realized quickly they couldn't afford it.

"I think to own the place we rent would cost at least $600,000, which we could never afford. We pay around $1,600 in rent [monthly]," says Brian Fleming.

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HELL HAS NO FURY LIKE A BROKER SCORNED

By Attorney George Warshaw

It was recently reported in the Boston Globe that former Boston Red Sox player Manny Ramirez finally sold his condo at the Ritz for $5.55 million dollars; but the sale was not without litigation by the brokers over a commission.

It was reported that the buyers were initially told about the property by a real estate broker. The buyers had no written contract with the broker and despite being encouraged to make an offer of $5.5 million, decided to bypass the broker and deal directly with the seller's real estate agent.

The broker cried, "foul" and filed suit claiming he had an "implied contract" for a commission.

Are the buyers liable for a commission without a written contract?

They may be.

Though Massachusetts has long recognized the rule that the mere introduction of a prospective buyer to a property does not earn the broker a commission, it may not take much more than that to create an implied contract.

Why the buyers decided to bypass the broker is uncertain. The broker would have been customarily paid by the seller's agent at no cost to the buyer. Now, the buyers may have to pay the commission.

We'll have to see how the facts unfold and the judge rules. ©2011 George Warshaw.

George Warshaw is a real estate attorney and author. He represents buyers and sellers of homes and condos in Massachusetts, and prepares wills, trusts, and estate plans. George welcomes new clients and questions at metro@warshawlaw.com.

You're invited to 'Dina's Party'

The former Real Housewife comes back to TV with a series about her event-planning business Her best party-planning advice includes what to do to avoid drama (she would know!)

On "Dina's Party," viewers will see Dina Manzo planning fabulous fetes that are sure to be buzzed about long after the last slice of cake is served. We got her top tips for throwing a super soiree of your own.

Create a 'wow factor' at the entrance

Get the party started in a fun way by having a celebrity impersonator or "living statue" greet guests, Manzo advises. "If there's somewhere you could put your money, I would suggest putting it in the entrance."

Plan activities — but don't stress about following a schedule

"You can have some kind of outline but there should be some room for flexibility. Never ever stop a great party to do a little interactive something if you don't think it's gonna be as exciting as people dancing."

Get creative with food

Keep the bites small and easy to eat with one hand. "If people are gonna be walking around and mingling, you know a drink is gonna be in another hand. Keep in mind your guests and the flow of the party. You don't want to have people have to find a table and sit down to eat their appetizers."

But don't forget the table fare. "Don't just plop your dishes down. ... If you're serving something as simple as wine and cheese, if you build up levels and create some interest it's gonna be more of an experience."

Watch the booze

One pour too many can ruin it all. "I always make ... the bartender give us a head's up if there's someone drinking too much."

MEREDITH ENGEL
meredith.engel@metro.us

More from Manzo

No party is complete without ...
"Great food in abundance. As great as the decor and the whole experience can be, you don't want people leaving hungry and having to go through a drive-through on the way home."

The first thing I ask myself when planning a party is ...
"What is the guest of honor really about? For me, it's not about just putting on another pretty party: I wanna make it about who the party's for."

The last finishing touch I put on my party is ...
"A deep breath and a smile, because you're there to get together and have a good time. And anything that goes wrong, most people aren't gonna notice."

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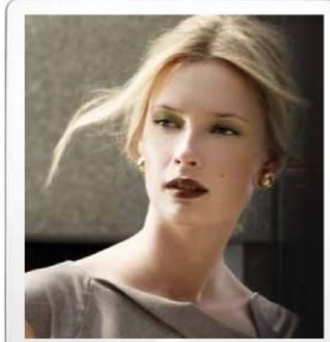

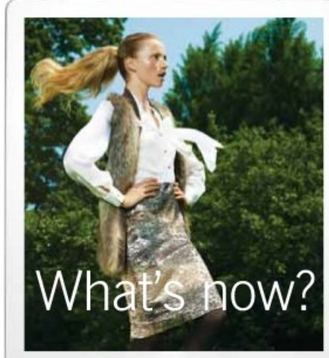

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